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In Search of Carolyn

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS

—BY—

BEULAH KING



Price 35 Cents

Eldridge Entertainment House

Franklin, Ohio

and

Denver, Colo.

944 So. Logan Street

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CHARACTERS

MR. DAWSON—a plain, jolly man of fifty.

MRS. DAWSON—a handsome woman of forty-five. Her ambition is to rise in society and her hobby is titles.

CAROLYN DAWSON—a beautiful girl of twenty. There is nothing silly about Carolyn. She is a beautiful little flower that has been protected from the harshness of the world.

THOMAS DUDLEY—who is wickedly handsome and possessed of a sympathetic heart.

ARTHUR HARRISFORD—of whom the war has made a man, although it failed to improve his looks.

ANDRIA FAY—a modern girl with all the dignity and beauty of a maid of the Middle Ages. She wears her wavy hair short.

FINNEY MANNERS—not much in brain or appearance. His life consists of one love affair after another.

THEODOSIA LANCASTER—a wholesome, whole-hearted girl with common sense although she does live the life Bohemian and wear her hair bobbed.

SUSAN—a maid.

COLETTE—a maid.



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DEC 30 1922

no 1

In Search of Carolyn

ACT I.

Scene—Library at the Dawson's. In the rear wall, center, double doors leading into the hall in which the staircase is visible. In the right wall, center, a door leading into a living room. The library is furnished richly, as might be expected of the family of a prosperous merchant of good taste.

Discovered—Mrs. Dawson seated with due elegance on a Chippendale chair. Mr. Dawson pacing the floor and smoking.

MRS. D.—Do sit down Henry. You make me nervous.

MR. D.—(*slyly*) Aren't you a bit nervous, yourself, old girl?

MRS. D.—(*disgusted*) Of course not. Haven't I dined with a duchess and taken tea with the wife of the prime minister?

MR. D.—(*completely squelched*) Ah, Clarissa, you have—that's a fact. What's an earl more or less to you?

MRS. D.—I feel this to be the great moment of my life—the moment for which I have lived.

MR. D.—(*humbly*) I'm sorry I wasn't an earl, Clarissa.

MRS. D.—(*solemnly*) I forgive you, Henry.

MR. D.—You are sure he'll make her a good husband?

MRS. D.—(*rebuff*) Henry!

MR. D.—They're a queer lot.

MRS. D.—He's mad about her.

MR. D.—But he hasn't seen her for four years. The war, my dear, has changed many a man's view point.

MRS. D.—Not about women, and Carolyn hasn't changed in that time.

MR. D.—Hasn't she? I rather thought she had. (*thoughtfully.*)

MRS. D.—She's as lovely as ever.

MR. D.—Oh, she's lovely enough, Clarissa, but her ideas.

MRS. D.—She's no business to have any at her age. She didn't sniff at his lordship four years ago, at Baden, and she won't sniff at him now. He has his title still, and his money.

MR. D.—(*thoughtfully*) I wonder if he has his pretty ways still.

MRS. D.—I know you never liked him, Henry. You made it very evident.

MR. D.—I'm sorry. I'll try to do better this time.

MRS. D.—Please—for my sake.

MR. D.—Oh, he wasn't a bad sort, but too soft, too deucedly soft.

MRS. D.—He went to war.

MR. D.—Yes, and let's hope it made a man of him. (*Suddenly*) You think he intends to marry Carolyn?

MRS. D.—Henry, you do ask the most useless questions. Of course he intends to marry her. What do you suppose he is coming to America for?

MR. D.—Er—I don't know, Clarissa—That's what I was wondering about.

MRS. D.—(*with infinite patience*) He landed yesterday. He is coming here today. Are you so dull—

MR. D.—I must be.

MRS. D.—The only thing for us to do is to show him Carolyn and—

MR. D.—Cela suffit.

MRS. D.—Exactly.

MR. D.—(*persistently*) I don't want to upset you, Clarissa, but what if Carolyn's ideas of a husband have changed since four years ago? She was a child then.

MRS. D.—My dear, they haven't changed. I have talked with her and she feels the same toward his lordship—exactly the same. She is a docile child.

MR. D.—Is she? (*Reminiscing.*) I wonder if you recall the day she told you she didn't like hurdy gurdy men—oh, not for a cent, and we found out later she had followed one half way round town?

MRS. D.—I don't get the significance, Henry, and I hate reminiscing. We were poor then, and nobodies.

MR. D.—Yes, we were poor then, and might be now but for Tom Dudley.

MRS. D.—Now, I suppose you are going to say you wish Carolyn would marry *him*.

MR. D.—Jove, Clarissa, how you do read my thoughts!

MRS. D.—If I have my way, and I intend to, Carolyn shall not meet Tom Dudley until her engagement to the Earl of Craven has been announced.

MR. D.—Ah, my dear, you misjudge Tom. He is the soul of honor.

MRS. D.—He is handsome, Henry, and the women like him.

MR. D.—Yes—yes, they do—that's a fact—the women like him.

MRS. D.—Didn't Mrs. Pratt make a fool of herself over him?

MR. D.—(*ruefully*) Yes, and he would have married her, poor boy—out of pity, if her husband hadn't taken her away. He's too blamed sympathetic, Tom is.

MRS. D.—He is, and I suppose he can't help being a heart breaker. That's why I don't want Carolyn to see him. You'll keep him away from the house, Henry?

(*Carolyn can be seen coming down the stairs.*)

MR. D.—Very well, my dear, I'll send him to Timbuctoo for a vacation. He needs one.

(Carolyn runs in to her father.)

CAR.—Oh, you wicked old dad, who is to be banished now? *(She kisses him.)*

MRS. D.—*(trying to be severe)* Carolyn, you should be napping.

CAR.—*(ignoring the remark)* You see, you banished me for eight years, and I know what it means.

MR. D.—Banished you? My dear, one never speaks of Paris as a place of banishment.

CAR.—*(pouting)* One does when Paris is seen in the company of the Countess Beaumont. Why, she was more sedate than mamma!

MR. D.—Ha, ha, ha!

CAR.—*(slumping in a chair)* Papa, do you want me to marry the Earl of Craven?

MR. D.—*(with a look at Mrs. D.)* Er—ahem! It's a very fine match, my dear.

MRS. D.—I think we won't discuss the earl now.

CAR.—*(spoiled)* Yes, we will, mamma.

(Mrs. D. coughs nervously)

CAR.—*(laughing)* Don't be alarmed, mamma dear-est. I liked him at Baden, didn't I? *(Rises and goes to her father.)* Do you remember, Dad, the funny way he had of sipping tea? Said his ancestors sipped it that way since the time of the first earl. *(Laughs.)* Funny, wasn't it?

MR. D.—*(chuckling)* Deucedly.

CAR.—*(coming back to chair and nestling down in it)* Awfully funny.

MRS. D.—*(going to Carolyn and smoothing her hair)* The first earl of Craven was a great soldier.

CAR.—Was he? I don't believe the present one is.

MRS. D.—I am sure he did his duty as a gentleman.

CAR.—He had terribly long legs. (*Dreamily*) He could have run away easily.

MR. D.—Ha, ha, ha!

CAR.—As I recall him now, he looked something like a spider.

MRS. D.—Carolyn!

CAR.—Oh, mamma, please. Some people *like* spiders and I never minded them in the least.

(*Mrs. D. opens her mouth, but closes it.*)

MR. D.—(*to Mrs. D.*) My dear, the present generation is famed for its—er—rather startling remarks. Don't let them upset you.

(*Mrs. D. subsides and goes back to her chair.*)

CAR.—Dad?

MR. D.—Yes?

CAR.—I saw an awfully attractive man sitting in your private office yesterday.

MRS. D.—Er-hem! (*Gives Mr. D. look of warning.*)

MR. D.—(*pretty good for him who has small imagination*) Ah—er—probably Wigglesworth. Poor chap, he's been in there a good deal lately. He has a wife and four children and is hard up. (*Mrs. D. looks approvingly on her lying husband.*) I'm on his note.

CAR.—A wife and four children—

MRS. D.—Yes, and he loves them dearly.

CAR.—I'm sure this man wasn't married. Wasn't there anyone else in your office yesterday?

MRS. D.—My dear child, can't you believe your father?

CAR.—Oh, yes, I always believe daddy. He couldn't tell a lie to save his life.

MR. D.—(*conscience-stricken*) A-hem!

CAR.—(*innocently*) But I thought he had made a mistake.

MR. D.—Perhaps I did, my dear, perhaps I did.

CAR.—I hope so. You see I thought nice things about this man all the way home. And last night I dreamed about him. Oh, it was the loveliest dream. Don't you think, daddy, he's just the kind of a man you would dream about?

MRS. D.—But one doesn't dream about a man who has a wife and four children.

CAR.—Don't you daddy? He's tall and dark, and—

MRS. D.— —has a wife and—

CAR.—No, he hasn't. We decided daddy had made a mistake. This is another man, and he's wonderful.

(Enter Susan, rear.)

SUSAN—Mrs. Dawson, will you come to the telephone?

MRS. D.—Yes, Susan. *(Goes out, followed by Susan)*

(Car. goes over to her father.)

CAR.—*(cautiously)* Daddy, I'll tell you something, if you won't tell mother.

MR. D.—I swear.

CAR.—He looked at me.

MR. D.—Who?

CAR.—That man in your office.

MR. D.—Well?

CAR.—He has wonderful eyes. Please, dad, tell me who he is. You know, and you can't deny it.

MR. D.—But I did tell you.

CAR.—It wasn't the truth.

MR. D.—How can that be? You just informed me I couldn't tell a lie to save my life.

CAR.—But that's how I knew.

MR. D.—Ha, ha, ha!

CAR.—Now, please, before mother comes back. *(She holds her ear to his lips.)* Who is he?

MR. D.—I told you, my dear.

CAR.—(*walking away from him*) YOU'LL be sorry, daddy.

MR. D.—Daughters should not doubt their fathers.

CAR.—(*mischievously*) Not even when their fathers have eyes that speak the truth if their lips don't?

MR. D.—Do mine?

CAR.—Yes, daddy, they do. Besides, I know who the man is.

MR. D.—Of course you do. I've told you.

CAR.—He's the junior partner of the firm of Dawson & Dudley.

MR. D.—(*flinging up his hands*) I give up.

CAR.—Oh, dad, he's a dear. *Is he married? Tell me. Just whisper. (Pause. Dad is about to give in—then Mrs. Dawson enters.)*

MRS. D.—(*impressively*) The earl.

MR. D.—(*imitating*) Ah!

MRS. D.—He's coming right over. (*To Car.*) Run, my cherie. Everything is ready.

CAR.—(*not in the least flustered*) The Earl!—I wonder if the war *has* changed him.

MR. D.—Run along, honey. Mind your mother. You mustn't keep the great man waiting.

(*Car. runs to the foot of the stairs while they watch her with pride.*)

MRS. D.—(*turning to Mr. D.*) He's as much in love with her as ever.

MR. D.—(*unconsciously repeating Carolyn's words*) I wonder if the war *has* changed him.

CAR.—(*running back in their midst*) Funny, isn't it, my becoming the wife of an earl? (*Laughing gayly*) I'm not so sure but I like the idea immensely. (*She runs off and up over the stairs like a will-o'-the-wisp.*)

MR. D.—(*chuckling*) She's spoiled, but she's the best spoiled kid in the world.

MRS. D.—(*to herself*) I've decided on her black velvet.

MR. D.—Eh?

MRS. D.—Did you ever think Henry, how fortunate we are to have such a lovely and such a docile daughter?

MR. D.—Many times, my dear.

MRS. D.—I never knew Carolyn to oppose me openly. She has always done as I wished and when I think of Mrs. Beckford and her four unruly daughters, I am doubly thankful.

MR. D.—They are clever girls.

MRS. D.—Oh, they're clever enough after a fashion, but think how many times they have broken her heart.

MR. D.—Yes, it must be pretty well shattered by now.

MRS. D.—There was Lucile who could have married that rich Mr. Reaveley, and she wouldn't. Nothing under heaven could make her.

(*Car. calls from top of stairs.*)

CAR.—Mother, shall I wear my pearls?

MRS. D.—No, dearie—no ornaments tonight.

CAR.—Very well, mother.

MRS. D.—(*with satisfaction*) What would Mrs. Beckford give to have a daughter like Carolyn?

(*Enter Susan.*)

SUSAN—(*announcing*) The Earl of Craven.

(*Enter at the rear door, the earl. Exit Susan.*)

(*The earl is still ugly, but we are sure at the first glance that the war has changed him.*)

MRS. D.—(*rushing to meet him*) My dear boy, you honor us. (*They shake hands.*)

CRAVEN—How do you do, Mrs. Dawson? You're looking wonderfully fit. (*Shakes hands with Mr. D.*) How do you do, sir?

MR. D.—Excellently, my lord, and you?

CRAVEN—Oh, I'm the same lean bird I've always been.

MR. D.—(*scrutinizing him*) Are you?

CRAVEN—(*getting his meaning*) Well—perhaps, not wholly. My friends tell me I've developed a sense of humor.

MR. D.—Bravo! I predict a ripe old age.

CRAVEN—Perhaps I won't want it.

MRS. D.—(*with sudden perspicacity*) Oh, come, now, why shouldn't a fine young man like you want it? Um?

MR. D.—Perhaps, Clarissa, he doesn't care to state his reasons.

CRAVEN—Oh, yes, I do. There's nothing secret about them—in fact I think you ought to know, if you haven't already guessed.

MRS. D.—(*sitting and indicating chair for Craven*) There. I'm sure he'll feel better telling someone. It's wrong to keep troubles to one's self.

CRAVEN—They're not exactly troubles—that is, not yet. Oh, the deuce; can't you see? It all depends on Carolyn.

MRS. D.—There!

CRAVEN—(*shyly*) I've loved her since the first day I saw her. I've never been able to forget her.

MRS. D.—Poor boy!

CRAVEN—She—she hasn't anyone—any—

MR. D.—Ha, ha, ha!

MRS. D.—(*quickly*) My dear boy, no. I'll tell you something if you'll not tell.

CRAVEN—Yes?

MRS. D.—I think she's never forgotten you.

CRAVEN—You don't say. (*Sobering*) Well, I wouldn't blame her. If I had seen such a rare old bird I wouldn't have forgotten him either. (*To Mr. D.*) My sense of humor, sir. Five years ago I couldn't have said that.

MR. D.—(*delighted*) I believe you.

MRS. D.—(*in deepest sympathy*) I'm sure she doesn't think of you in that way.

CRAVEN—I'm thankful to know she thinks of me at all.

MRS. D.—She is very anxious to see you again.

CRAVEN—Does she remember Baden?

MRS. D.—Does she remember it? My dear boy, she has talked more of Baden than any other part of the world.

CRAVEN—So much has happened since then.

MR. D.—(*sitting*) To you, yes, but not to her.

MRS. D.—No, not to her. She is the same sweet child.

CRAVEN—(*simply*) I'm glad she hasn't changed. I liked her so well as she was. You were in the country during the war?

MRS. D.—We had just come home that July. Come, tell us about yourself. You have been in the midst of things.

CRAVEN—There is nothing to tell. The war came, and I enlisted—then the war was over and now, here I am.

MRS. D.—But all that happened in between. The terrible battles, the mud, the canned beef, the dreadful Germans.

CRAVEN—(*laughing*) You have told it, madam.

MR. D.—Were you wounded?

CRAVEN—Twice.

MRS. D.—(*cooingly*) Oh, my poor boy.

CRAVEN—Tell me, does Miss Carolyn still love adventure?

MRS. D.—Adventure?

MR. D.—Adventure?

CRAVEN—Don't tell me she has lost all zest for the game.

MRS. D.—Carolyn? Adventure?

MR. D.—Didn't know she was adventuresome.

CRAVEN—Oh, but she is; at least she was. I've thought since, it was that quality that made me like her best. Didn't know it then, but I've thought things over a bit since.

MR. D.—Well, you've got me.

MRS. D.—(*pulling bell cord*) You shall judge for yourself. It's time she came down.

CRAVEN—I am too prejudiced to judge her.

(*Enter Susan, rear door.*)

MRS. D.—Tell Miss Carolyn to come down.

(*Susan goes upstairs.*)

(*Suddenly Craven gets up and begins to pace the floor abstractedly.*)

MR. D.—(*patting his shoulder*) What is it, my boy? Nervous?

MRS. D.—Nervous because he fears disappointment.

CRAVEN—Only for her. I—I think I'm a bit uglier than I was—if possible.

MR. D.—Nonsense! (*He is enjoying himself.*)

CRAVEN—I'd hate to have her think I was.

MRS. D.—(*foolishly*) You're wonderful!

MR. D.—(*chuckling*) There—and from a woman. What better encouragement can you ask?

CRAVEN—But, when a girl has a hundred choices, she isn't likely to pick a bird like me. Miss Carolyn's a winner! (*Thoughtfully*) And then I was something of a prune at Baden.

MR. D.—Ha, ha, ha!

(*Susan is seen hurrying down the stairs. She enters and goes straight to Mrs. D. and talks softly. Mrs. D. is seen to start. Mr. D. witnesses the scene with a scowl of irritation and Craven continues to pace the floor. At this moment, Colette, Carolyn's maid, bursts into the room.*)

COLETTE—(*wringing her hands*) She is gone! Madam, she is gone! There is nothing—no words! Mon dieu, what shall I do?

MRS. D.—Hush!

COLETTE—(*running about in circles*) You ask me to hush? How can I hush? She is gone—gone—gone!

MRS. D.—(*to Craven*) Pray forgive Colette. She is excited unnecessarily. (*With wonderful calmness*) I will go up.

COLETTE—Mon dieu. What will become of her? What will become of her?

(*Mrs. D. goes upstairs and Colette follows, wringing her hands and moaning:*) How should I know she would do this thing?

CRAVEN—What's the matter? What is it all about?

MR. D.—These women. Because they fail to find her in a minute think she has run away. Carolyn—run away! Ha, ha! She is probably admiring herself in every mirror in the house.

CRAVEN—Jove! I don't blame her.

(*A shriek from Colette, and the sudden slam of a door.*)

CRAVEN—Good heavens! Is the woman mad?

MR. D.—(*walking to the foot of the stairs*) It is only Colette! She shrieks at a mouse. (*Comes down stage.*)

CRAVEN—Fancy and such a blood-curdling shriek!

MR. D.—Did you have a good trip across?

CRAVEN—(*smiling sheepishly*) Sick, as usual. Haven't you noticed a greenish tinge about me? Then I was full of doubts, as the poets say.

MR. D.—Doubts?

CRAVEN—(*nervously*) I still have them. I wish she would come down. (*Mr. D. chuckles.*) Mr. Dawson, I know I ought to make a formal request for your daughter's hand, if they do that sort of thing now.

MR. D.—Are you making it?

Craven—I am. I adored her four years ago and I adore her now.

MR. D.—My dear fellow, so far as I am concerned, your request is granted. Four years ago, I couldn't have said the same thing. If Carolyn wishes to marry you, you both have my blessing.

Craven—I thank you, sir. (*Glancing toward stairs*) If only I were sure of her. (*Mrs. D. is seen coming down stairs.*) Here comes Mrs. Dawson. (*With relief.*)

MRS. D.—(*with an unnatural calmness*) Such a time! Dear me! But then you understand.

Craven—Yes—yes, but where is she?

MRS. D.—(*with feigned laughter*) Now, hear him! Just like an impatient schoolboy.

Craven—I thought I'd been rather patient.

MR. D.—Jove, he has. Come, Clarissa, where's Carolyn?

MRS. D.—(*Behind the earl's back she raises her eyebrows in a warning that causes Mr. D. to subside.*) My dear boy, I suppose you have been patient, but I shall have to ask you to be patient a little longer.

Craven—(*excitedly*) What is it?

MRS. D.—Carolyn has been taken with a chill.

MR. D.—Taken with a chill! (*The eyebrows give another warning.*)

MRS. D.—She won't be able to come down to dinner.

Crave—(*boyishly*) I feared as much. I knew something would happen.

MRS. D.—(*soothingly*) There—there—don't be alarmed. Probably a slight cold.

MR. D.—Have you sent for the doctor?

MRS. D.—I have, for safety's safe. (*With another lift of the eyebrows.*) It is nothing. Henry, take Lord Craven in the hothouses and soothe him. (*Laughing.*) I want him to see the roses.

CRAVEN—(protesting) But I—

MRS. D.—Come on. (*Takes his arm.*) If we can't show you one flower, we can another. (*He leads him off, rear door.*)

(*Immediately Mrs. D. goes to the bell cord and pulls it furiously. Enter Susan, door rear.*)

MRS. D.—(frantically) Call Mr. Dudley on the telephone and tell him to come over at once. At once, Susan!

SUSAN—Yes, madam. (*She goes off door rear. Mrs. D. gives an hysterical cry and buries her face in her hands. Susan returns by rear door.*)

SUSAN—Mr. Dudley has just now come in, madam.

MRS. D.—Show him in. (*Susan goes off, rear door. Mrs. D. takes a crumpled note from her bosom and sobs over it.*)

(*Enter Susan, rear door.*)

SUSAN—Mr. Dudley.

(*Enter Mr. Dudley, rear.*)

MRS. D.—(running to him) Tom, it is dreadful! Shut the door—all the doors! Oh, Tom, what am I to do?

(*Tom shuts the door.*)

TOM—My dear Mrs. Dawson, what is it? (*He is distressed for her.*)

MRS. D.—(in a terrible voice) Carolyn has run away.

TOM—What do you mean?

MRS. D.—(thrusting the note in his hands) Read!! (*He attempts to take it and she snatches it back.*) Listen:—Dear mother, (*sobs*) I don't think I want to marry the Earl of Craven, as I remember him at Baden, and I do not want to disobey you, so I am running away. It seems best. Love, Carolyn. (*sobs*) Oh, Tom, help me. What shall I do? I cannot let *him* know.—He has come for dinner tonight. He was waiting here to see her

when I found out. —He has come from England to see her— We cannot let him know the truth of this— It—it would ruin the prospects.

TOM—What did you tell him?

MRS. D.—I told him she was ill, but if we do not find her tonight—tomorrow?— Then what?

TOM—She—she might be sick indefinitely until we do find her.

MRS. D.—But, who will find her? We cannot advertise. It must be kept secret. Above all things it must be kept secret.

TOM—Yes—yes.

MRS. D.—(*wailing*) Oh, Tom, we must find her. He is in love with her—desperately in love with her. He intends to marry her.— Don't you understand?

TOM—Yes—yes.

MRS. D.—Then do something—say something.

TOM—But, what can I do? (*Desperately.*)

MRS. D.—You might go in search of her. You might—you might, for my sake, and—and—(*weeps.*)

TOM—(*at the sight of tears*) I will do anything.— (*suddenly*) But, good heavens, I don't know her.

MRS. D.—Oh!

TOM—(*innocently*) I caught a fleeting glimpse of her yesterday, as I sat in the office.

MRS. D.—(*alert*) You caught a fleeting glimpse of her?

TOM—Yes, I was writing, and when I looked up she stood there—(*more to himself*) but she vanished almost at once, and all I saw was a mass of golden hair and—

MRS.—D—Tom, I want you to promise me something. (*With a quick glance.*)

TOM—What is it?

MRS. D.—When you do find Carolyn you are not to fall in love with her. Oh, promise me—do promise me!

TOM—(*conscientiously*) That is a hard promise, Mrs. Dawson. The only thing I can say to comfort you is, that I have reached the age of thirty and never fallen in love yet.

MRS. D.—Oh, but Carolyn's different, and you've lived in India half your life.

TOM—(*worried*) But, how can I promise? That is something one cannot promise. (*She weeps.*) Listen. I'll promise to bring Carolyn to you as soon as possible, after she is found, and then—

MRS. D.—Ah!—yes—before she has time to fall in love with you. (*Tom laughs.*) But, they do, Tom. They all fall in love with you and that is why I couldn't bear to have you see Carolyn. You'll promise to bring her straight to me?

TOM—I promise.—Is the earl so—er—unattractive?

MRS. D.—No-o, but he's not like you, Tom. You—you are terrible. I've worried about Carolyn since the first day I met you.

TOM—I'm sorry, but, after all, I'm rather a hard-hearted duffer. Have you an idea where she might have gone?

MRS. D.—(*in an awful whisper*) Just the slightest. Listen! She has a fondness for painting.

TOM—Ah!

MRS. D.—By chance she has gone with the artists—to that terrible place—what is it called?—Greenwich Village!

TOM—Ah, yes—Greenwich Village!

MRS. D.—(*weeping*) Oh, my darling!

TOM—There—there—I'm sure no harm can come to her.

MRS. D.—It is— (*very impressively*) a den of corruption!

TOM—Never!

MRS. D.—(*her arms about him*) You will save her, won't you, Tom, and bring her to me, safe? Say you will.

TOM—(*appreciating the situation*) I will save her.

MRS. D.—(*pacing the floor*) Oh, Tom, I feel you will. —That dreadful place! She will cut her hair off!

TOM—(*amused in spite of the tragedy*) It will grow again.

MRS. D.—But he must not see her. He—what would he think?

TOM—If he loves her, he will not mind.

MRS. D.—(*weeping*) He does love her, yes, he does love her, Tom. I am sure of it.

TOM—Of course he does.

MRS. D.—Oh, Tom! You are comforting. Do my eyes look red?

TOM—(*gallantly*) Not at all.

MRS. D.—(*dabbing at them*) I shall call him in. I shall say something.—What I shall say I do not know—but I shall tell him something.

TOM—I'll go directly—the sooner the better.

MRS. D.—Ah, yes! The sooner the better—. My darling child. My poor Carolyn!

TOM—Voici, the artist! Tom Dupre, lately of Paris! If Mistress Carolyn is in Greenwich Village, I shall find her. (*Bowing low.*) Adieu, Madame. Do not weep. (*He goes off rear door with a flourish, and Mrs. D. feels better for having seen him. She goes to mirror and primps.*)

(*Enter Craven and Mr. D., door right.*)

CRAVEN—(*going straight to Mrs. D.*) What did he say—the doctor?

MRS. D.—My dear boy, she has a fever! Oh! (*with a wail*) she may have to have her hair cut off!

MR. D.—(*who will not be put off any longer*) Clarissa, what do you mean? A(*Starting to stairs.*) I will go up!

MRS. D.—(*detaining him gently but firmly*) I wouldn't, Henry. She is asleep. The doctor has gone.

I have told you everything. It may be a matter of days—one can never tell.

CRAVEN—Horrible!

MRS. D.—But you will keep up heart. (*Helplessly*) I shall need you, my boy, to lean upon. You—you will stay near us?

CRAVEN—Depend upon me. I couldn't do otherwise.

MRS. D.—Oh, you are wonderful!

(*Enter Susan.*)

SUSAN—Dinner is served.

CRAVEN—(*offering his arm*) Begin right now, Mrs. Dawson. Pray lean on me.

MRS. D.—Thank you so much. I'm sure we can't any of us eat a thing.

(*They go off as the curtain falls.*)

CURTAIN



ACT II.

Time—Three days later. Evening.

Scene—Finney Manners' studio. In the rear wall, center, a door leading into main corridor. In the right wall, center, door leading to another room. The room is sparsely furnished. Down stage, right, is a couch. Down stage left, a table with typewriter. In the upper left hand corner, a platform with a throne chair draped. In the left wall a cupboard filled with plates and edibles. Chairs and easel complete the furnishings, and a tall stool. Discovered—Finney Manners seated dejectedly on the stool; Theodosia Lancaster typing.

THEODOSIA—Finney, why don't you write?

FINNEY—Can't. I'm in love.

THEO.—Yes, hopelessly in love.

FINNEY—That's right. Rub it in.

THEO.—She'll never have you, Finney—never. She's not in sympathy with your ideas.

FIN.—I haven't any ideas when she's around.

THEO.—But you do have them, and she hears of them and she doesn't like them. She's not the girl for you, Finney, and you'd be desperately unhappy with her. Take the advice of one older than yourself. Little Lucile is in love with you.

FIN.—I'm sorry for her.

THEO.—Of course you are, and you're going to make her happy and not bother with Andria any more.

FIN.—(*ecstatically*) Andria!

THEO.—(*rising*) I know Andria's beautiful, but she doesn't love you, Finney, and you'll find out some day.

FIN.—Do you think she loves (*indicating room across the hall*) him?

THEO.—Dupre? (*She walks over and sits on platform.*)

FIN.—Yes.

THEO.—Perhaps.

FIN.—He doesn't know beans.

THEO.—Oh, Finney!

FIN.—About art. I got him cornered the other night.

THEO.—That was nasty of you. He's terribly handsome. Mr. Kessier wanted him for a model.

FIN.—Bah!

THEO.—Have you seen any of his paintings?

FIN.—Of course not. He hasn't any.

(*Enter, rear door, Andria Fay. She stops on the threshold. Theo and Finney admire her silently. One always admires Andria.*)

ANDRIA—Theo!

THEO.—Yes?

ANDRIA—I want to talk to you alone.

FIN.—I suppose that means I'm to go.

ANDRIA—If you please, Finney.

FIN.—Just as you wish.

ANDRIA—Thank you, Finney.

(Exit Finney, rear door, and Andria runs to Theo and flings herself in her arms.)

ANDRIA—Oh, Theo, I'm desperately—hopelessly—incurably in love.

THEO.—Andria! *(Andria weeps.)* There—there, dear, tell Theo all about it.

ANDRIA—And he doesn't love me.

THEO.—The cruel wretch. Who is he?

ANDRIA—*(walking away from her, down stage)* That mysterious artist, known as Tom Dupre, who doesn't paint, or sculpture, or write verse!

THEO.—Oh, Andria!

ANDRIA—Don't say it in those hopeless tones or I shall die. Theo, I have never been in love before in all the twenty-three years of my life!

THEO.—*(going to her)* Hush, dear.

ANDRIA—*(sinking on the edge of the platform)* He has the most wonderful eyes.

THEO.—I know.

ANDRIA—And nose!

THEO.—*(nodding sadly)* Yes.

ANDRIA—And chin! *(Theo nods again.)* And the nicest voice. Why, Theo, he's a regular god. And he's so cruelly indifferent.

THEO.—Have you talked with him? *(Sits beside Andria.)*

ANDRIA—*(in a melancholy voice)* Once!

THEO.—What did he say?

ANDRIA—*(solemnly)* He said—wonderful weather we're having.

THEO—That was nice.

ANDRIA—And safe.

THEO—Yes, I'm afraid he's a wary chap.

ANDRIA—I've just got to talk with him. For four days now, I have watched him come in and out, and Theo—it's terribly exciting—I think he's watching me!

THEO—Perhaps he's not so indifferent as you think.

ANDRIA—Oh, he doesn't admire me. I don't mean that.

(There is a knock at the rear door.)

THEO—Come in.

(Enter Tom, clad in artist's garb, which only enhances his good looks.)

TOM—*(stepping back)* I beg your pardon; I thought this was Mr. Manners' studio.

THEO—*(rising)* It is. Won't you come in?

TOM—*(his eyes on Andria)* Is Mr. Manners here?

THEO—Not just at present, but I'll get him for you if you wish.

TOM—That's mighty kind of you. I do want to see him.

THEO—He's over at the theater, I think. *(Starts toward door rear.)*

TOM—Wait. That's some distance, isn't it? If you'll direct me—

THEO—*(laughing)* Dear me; I couldn't. It's easier to go for him, and I don't mind in the least.

(Tom looks uneasily at Andria.)

THEO—You're Mr. Dupre, are you not?

TOM—I am.

THEO—I'm Theo Lancaster and this is Andria Fay.

(Tom bows to each stiffly. Andria rises.)

ANDRIA—I'm sure Mr. Dupre will wait with me.

(*Indicates throne chair.*) Perhaps he'll take the throne and let me be his slave.

THEO—(*laughing*) The setting is good. I'm afraid I'm going to miss a good deal.

ANDRIA—Oh, no—only the first act and the second's always the best.

THEO—But you must have a good beginning. (*Exit rear door, slamming it behind her. Pause, during which Tom looks at her fixedly.*)

TOM—So you've cut your hair off.

ANDRIA—Yes. (*She is outwardly calm.*)

TOM—She said you would.

ANDRIA—Who?

TOM—Your mother.

ANDRIA—You know my mother?

TOM—Very well.

ANDRIA—That's strange.

TOM—She said you'd come here, too.

ANDRIA—Here?

TOM—To Greenwich Village.

ANDRIA—Well, in spite of the age, a mother is sometimes aware of her daughter's intentions. Won't you sit down?

TOM—(*ignoring the request*) Why did you do it? (*Andria raises her brows slightly.*) Come here, I mean.

ANDRIA—To paint.

TOM—Is that all?

ANDRIA—Quite. I presume you came for the same reason.

TOM—Yes—er—I wanted atmosphere.

ANDRIA—That's the way I feel about it. Atmosphere means a whole lot.

TOM—But you shouldn't have gone away so—er—suddenly.

ANDRIA—(*leaning against the stool*) Shouldn't I?

TOM—No; it wasn't kind to your mother.

ANDRIA—But it had to be sudden or not at all. I always act on impulse and I'm seldom sorry for it afterward.

TOM—Your mother is terribly upset.

ANDRIA—I suppose so, but after all, she lived her life as she wanted to, and—why shouldn't I?

TOM—Because the course she had planned for you is wiser. (*He goes over to table.*)

ANDRIA—That's what you think. I don't.

TOM—You don't know. You didn't wait to find out.

ANDRIA—One can't wait indefinitely.

TOM—But you only had a few minutes more.

(*She looks at him quickly.*)

ANDRIA—I don't understand you.

TOM—He had come before you left the house.

ANDRIA—(*amazed*) Who?

TOM—The earl.

ANDRIA—The earl?

TOM—Yes.

ANDRIA—Still, I don't understand you.

TOM—Oh, yes you do.

ANDRIA—(*wildly*) I am sure there's a mistake somewhere.

TOM—Aren't you Carolyn Dawson?

ANDRIA—Carolyn Dawson? (*Suddenly, a light breaking*) Is that why you have been watching me?

TOM—Yes, and that's why you've been watching me.

ANDRIA—Oh, no, it isn't—not at all.

TOM—It must be.

ANDRIA—Don't you think a person might like to watch you for any other reason? (*Mischievously*) Don't you?

TOM—And I am going to take you back to your mother.

ANDRIA—Indeed you are not.

TOM—But I promised her.

ANDRIA—You never promised *my* mother.

TOM—I should think you'd hate to worry her like this.

ANDRIA—I'm not worrying her. We had it out before I left and now she's quite reconciled.

TOM—But the earl—poor chap.

ANDRIA—If you persist in saying I'm Carolyn What's-her-name I shall have to use drastic measures.

TOM—It would be so easy all around if you'd only be honest. Perhaps after you got home your mother would let you off from marrying him.

ANDRIA—(*laughing*) Oh, dear! Is he so terrible—this earl person?

TOM—Don't you recall him at all?

ANDRIA—Naturally not. One doesn't remember persons one never has seen.

TOM—I didn't have an idea it would be so hard—

ANDRIA—Um?

TOM— —so hard, I say, getting you home. (*Coming down stage.*) You see, the trouble is, I'm weakening. I—I think you should live your own life.

ANDRIA—Everyone should.

TOM—But I promised your mother.

ANDRIA—Mr. Dupre, won't you believe me when I tell you I'm not Carolyn—

TOM—How can I believe you when there is every indication that you are?

ANDRIA—And what are the indications, pray?

TOM—(*shyly*) Blonde—beautiful—a talent for painting, and bobbed hair!

ANDRIA—Oh!

TOM—(*going to her*) Now, will you let me take you back to your mother?

ANDRIA—You *are* an unusual man!

TOM—Will you?

ANDRIA—Look at me. Come here. (*He goes nearer*)
Now look straight into my eyes.

TOM—(*turning away*) No!

ANDRIA—Why?

TOM—(*coming down stage*) I'm afraid.

ANDRIA—Afraid you'll discover I'm telling the truth?

TOM—No.

ANDRIA—Afraid of what?

TOM—Of you.

ANDRIA—But what can I *do* to make you believe me?

TOM—I don't know. (*Going back to her.*) I'd like to believe you.

ANDRIA—That's a help.

TOM—I'd feel a lot happier.

ANDRIA—Don't you want to find Carolyn?

TOM—Oh, yes.

ANDRIA—Then?

TOM—(*suddenly*) I don't want to fall in love with her.

ANDRIA—(*taken back*) Oh!

TOM—You see, I promised her mother I wouldn't. It's rather a mess, isn't it?

ANDRIA—It is. (*Pause.*)

ANDRIA—And if she falls in love with you?

TOM—She isn't to do that either.

ANDRIA—Oh, indeed!

TOM—Not that she would.

ANDRIA—Oh, I don't know; she might.

TOM—Not with an earl for a possible husband.

ANDRIA—You have rather a poor opinion of women.

TOM—Oh, no, I haven't. Not a bit, but an earl is an earl and we are all more or less ambitious.

ANDRIA—(*thoughtfully*) Yes, an earl is an earl!

TOM—I'm sure he loves you.

ANDRIA—Who?

TOM—The earl.

ANDRIA—(*impatient with it all*) Oh, dear!

TOM—And he's probably an awfully good sort—and it would please your mother and your dad—and be rather fine all around.

ANDRIA—How beautifully you plead another man's cause.

TOM—Perhaps because I haven't a cause of my own.

ANDRIA—But you ought to have.

TOM—(*abstractedly*) Yes.

ANDRIA—Haven't you ever been in love?

TOM—No-o.

ANDRIA—I suppose you've always been told you mustn't. (*Sarcasm.*)

TOM—(*stiffly*) This is the only instance.

ANDRIA—(*wickedly*) Do you always do what's told you?

TOM—(*getting nervous*) I try to.

ANDRIA—Whether it's the thing or not?

TOM—I suppose it is the thing in this case. Falling in love with another man's girl is a bad policy.

ANDRIA—But this poor Carolyn, evidently she's not in love with the earl or she would never have run away.

TOM—She doesn't know whether she is or not, and I don't believe in breaking up even embryo love affairs.

ANDRIA—You are sweet.—But one cannot always direct his affections.

TOM—(*earnestly*) No—worse luck!

(*Theo, followed by Finney, bursts in door rear.*)

THEO—(*pushing Finney forward*) I've fetched him. Behold the admirable verse maker, Finney Manners, whose poems grace all the leading magazines when he writes them.

FIN.—(*to Tom*) How do you do, sir? (*He is not too cordial.*)

TOM—(*stiffly*) How do you do?

THEO—Come Andria!

ANDRIA—(*going to Tom*) Good night, Mr. Dupre. I hope you find Carolyn.

TOM—I intend to return her to her mother before morning. Good night.

(*Exeunt Theo and Andria, rear door.*)

TOM—(*desperately, after door is closed*) Who is that person?

FIN.—(*banteringly*) Which person?

TOM—That girl with the bobbed hair.

FIN.—Both have bobbed hair.

TOM—Oh, has the other one bobbed hair, too?

FIN.—What other one?

TOM—Look here, you've got to help me out. That girl who calls herself Andria is someone else. (*Tom gets excited.*)

FIN.—Indeed? Be careful what you say about that girl.

TOM—She's Carolyn Dawson and her mother wants her home, and I've come to fetch her.

FIN.—She'll never go.

TOM—She's got to go. I tell you, she's got to go tonight.

FIN.—But what right have you?

TOM—(*interrupting*) The right of a family friend.

FIN.—Oh.

TOM—Will you help me?

FIN.—I'd rather not. You see, I'm not partial to her going. I much prefer she stays here.

TOM.—But what right have you—

FIN.—The right of a suitor.

TOM.—Good lord!

FIN.—Well, why not?

TOM.—Because she's already pledged to the Earl of Craven.

FIN.—WHAT!

TOM.—He is waiting to marry her.

FIN.—Andria!

TOM.—Carolyn! My dear boy, she has been fooling you. She has known all along she would some time return to him.

(Pause while Finney thinks things over.)

FIN.—Huh!-- *(grinding his teeth)* What do you want me to do.— What do you want me to do?

TOM.—*(coming close)* I want you to help me to steal her tonight, and get her in a taxi and home.

FIN.—Ah! *(He smells revenge.)*

TOM.—Invite her here with that other one.

FIN.—Ah!

TOM.—We'll have a little supper by candle light.

FIN.—Ah!

TOM.—Suddenly—

FIN.—*(getting the spirit of the thing)* —the candles will go out. That's the signal. I'll fling a cloak over her head—you'll bind her hands and feet, and we'll take her—

TOM.—*(getting excited in turn)* —to the waiting taxi.

FIN.—Exactly.

TOM.—*(consulting his watch)* It's nine o'clock. I'll go to my room. Get them here, and I'll come back in a few minutes. *(At door.)*

FIN.—They'll come, all right. Theo's using my typewriter. I'll go with you to get the cloak. We'll leave the door open. (*Opens it.*)

TOM—You're sure they'll come.

FIN.—Yes, as soon as they see the room is empty.

(*Tom and Finney go out rear door, leaving it open.*)

(*The stage is empty for only a moment before Theo, followed by Andria, appears at door.*)

THEO—(*calling*) Finney? (*She waits. There is no answer.*) He's gone. Well! (*She goes to machine and sits.*)

ANDRIA—He's bad lately. He ought to get to work. Those last royalties were his undoing.

THEO—(*laughing*) Royalties? My dear, it's not royalties. He's in love with you.

ANDRIA—(*climbing to throne*) I know he is, and I never could appreciate how miserable he is until now.

THEO—(*meditating on the keys of the typewriter*) Finney thinks Dupre's in love with you.

ANDRIA—Why should he think so?

(*Enter Finney, rear door, carrying a cape rolled into a ball.*)

FIN.—(*closing door behind him and dropping the ball casually*) What do you two say to a little supper by candle light?

ANDRIA—Good heavens, Finney—no! I don't feel a bit like eating.

FIN.—(*fiendishly*) That's a pity, for I've invited Dupre to partake, but I suppose Theo and I could do the honors.

ANDRIA—Oh, well, I won't be unsociable. I can manage to swallow something.

THEO—That's the girl. Stay and make yourself useful. You might set the table while I'm finishing this. (*She types.*)

ANDRIA—I will. (*Rises and goes to cupboard.*)

FIN.—(*going for table*) I'll put it by the door.

ANDRIA—By the door? What's the idea?

FIN.—Well—er—the light, etc. (*Takes table.*)

THEO—(*stops work*) For heaven's sake, Finney, I always knew you were cranky, but this is the limit!

ANDRIA—(*attempting to take table from him*) Of course, he is, and he ought not to be catered to.

FIN.—(*pulling away from her*) I say that table has got to go over by the door.

ANDRIA—Well, of all things!

(*Finney places it and takes two candles from his pocket, lights them and sets them on the table.*)

FIN.—There—I'll have my way once in a while.

ANDRIA—(*who has been fumbling in the cupboard*) Where are the things?

FIN.—In the cupboard. (*While Andria is poking her head into the remote recesses of the cupboard and Theo is busy typing, Finney takes the cape and places in an inconspicuous spot under the table.*) Find anything? There's cake and some ham, and—

ANDRIA—(*taking things out*) Sure enough. What a nice lunch, Finney. I'm glad I came.

FIN.—Thought you said you weren't hungry.

ANDRIA—(*setting table*) Did I?—What are we going to have to drink?

FIN.—Good lord! I'll have to go out and get something.

THEO—(*rising*) I'll go with you. I need some air to give me an appetite.

FIN.—What will I get?

ANDRIA—Get some fruit punch.

THEO—(*to Finney*) Money enough?

FIN.—For once, yes—come on.

(*Exeunt Theo and Finney, door rear.*)

ANDRIA *continues to set the table. After a short time, the door opens and Tom enters.*)

TOM—*(starting back)* I beg your pardon. Am I early?

ANDRIA—Oh, no. Come in. The others will be back directly.

TOM—Perhaps I'd better go.

ANDRIA—I suppose you still think I am Carolyn of the earl's choice.

TOM—I'm afraid I do.

ANDRIA—And that you'll fall in love with me?

TOM—Exactly.

ANDRIA—*(going to him)* Suppose, just while they're gone, you *don't* think that. Suppose *(wistfully)* you think I'm what I am truly—just Andria Fay, the daughter of a poor artist.—Will you?

TOM—I can't.

ANDRIA—Yes you can, and when they come back you may think as you please.

TOM—It would lead to complications.

ANDRIA—How?

TOM—I—I—

ANDRIA—Yes?

TOM—I might actually fall in love, you know.

ANDRIA—Oh! *(Pause.)*

TOM—And I couldn't have you.

ANDRIA—You could if I were Andria Fay—and I am.

TOM—Jove! I wish you were! *(The exclamation is genuine.)*

ANDRIA—You do! You wish I were Andria! Oh, it is too wonderful!

TOM—*(coming down stage)* If you are Andria—if by any chance you are Andria—do you mean what you just said?

ANDRIA—Yes—but I expect a decent proposal.

TOM—Of course.

ANDRIA—Then make it.

TOM—(*solemnly, because he is very much in earnest*) Andria, I love you. Will you be my wife?

ANDRIA—(*touched*) That's superb.

TOM—But your answer?

ANDRIA—Yes, Tom, I will. (*Pause.*) By rights we should seal it with a kiss.

TOM—Should we? (*He comes forward and they are about to kiss when Tom draws away.*)

ANDRIA—What is it?

TOM—(*with a groan*) I can't kiss you. I love you. (*They stand facing each other as if bewitched when Theo and Finney come in.*)

THEO—Voici the punch. (*Finney places it on the table.*) Are we ready?

FIN.—(*suspiciously*) Ought to be.

ANDRIA—(*glad to think of something*) The glasses. (*Runs to cupboard.*)

FIN.—Are there enough?

ANDRIA—(*pulling them out*) One—two—three—

FIN.—There's one in the other room. (*He goes off door right.*)

THEO—(*sitting at table*) I believe I'm hungry.

ANDRIA—You always are. (*Tom goes over to Andria, by the cupboard.*)

THEO—Well, I'm a healthy young animal, as the poets say.

ANDRIA—(*softly, to Tom*) I wish you weren't so conscientious—Tommy! —and I wish you'd believe what a girl says.

TOM—(*regarding her sadly*) I wish I could.

ANDRIA—Think of the good time we'd be having. This might be the celebration of our engagement.

(Enter Finney with glass.)

FIN.—*(going to table)* Come on. The lost goblet is found. *(Switches off electric light.)*

(Theo pours the punch and the rest gather around and sit.)

THEO—Who's going to tell his life history tonight?

FIN.—Not I. I've already told mine with variations.

THEO—You will, Mr. Dupre.

TOM—Oh, mine is the set grey life and apathetic end.

THEO—Very well. Then Andria shall tell her story about drowning.

FIN.—Shoot.

ANDRIA—*(dreamily)* It was on the shores of Cape Ann—on that grand old beach known as Wingarsheek.

(All this is said as if rehearsed many times. Tom watches Andria as if bewitched.)

FIN.—Weird name.

ANDRIA—Isn't it? I was all alone!

THEO—Dangerous.

ANDRIA—So I learned. I got out beyond my depth!

FIN.—The undertow is strong.

ANDRIA—Very. A big wave came. I think it must have been the ninth.

THEO—Probably.

ANDRIA—I went under.

FIN.—You went over—your life's history.

ANDRIA—Exactly—I struggled—then all was a blank.

FIN.—Oh—a blank!

ANDRIA—I was on the beach. There was a crowd. A short, dark, middleaged man stood over me. He had saved my life!

FIN.—You loved him!

ANDRIA—No-o. I was grateful to him.

THEO—Naturally.

ANDRIA—I wanted to do something in return. One feels wonderfully sweet in those first moments of regaining consciousness—

THEO—He laughed at you?

ANDRIA—Exactly.—I insisted that he ask of me something.

THEO—He said, “some day—”

ANDRIA—I said, “within reason—”

THEO—He said, “very well—”

ANDRIA—I never saw him again.

FIN.—That was four years ago.

ANDRIA—That is all. (*Pause.*) (*To Tom.*) What do you think of my story?

TOM—Thrilling!—And suppose you do see him again, and he—

ANDRIA—Oh, I shall do what he asks, if it is within reason.

TOM—It's all according to what you consider within reason.

ANDRIA—Many things!

FIN.—I say we're a jolly company. Let's have a toast.

THEO—A toast!

(They jump up and in the excitement Finney manages to put out the candles and they are in total darkness. There is a scramble, a scuffling, the falling of a chair and broken glasses, then Andria screams.)

TOM—Got her?

FIN.—Almost. (*Another scuffle.*)

ANDRIA—Stop! Stop!

THEO—Police! Andria! Help! Police!

(More scuffles and muttered directions, then door at rear bursts open and Carolyn Dawson, a lighted candle in her hand, appears on the threshold.)

CAR.—*(at the sight)* Oh—oh—oh—oh—

TOM—Who are you?

FIN.—Make way there. *(To Car.)*

CAR.—I am Carolyn Dawson. Oh, what is this place? Wh—at— *(She faints, and as she falls the candle is somehow snuffed out, and they are in darkness again.)*

FIN.—She's fainted—that girl.

TOM—Put on the lights. *(Theo runs to the switch and turns on the lights and the group is revealed. Carolyn, a crumpled mass on the floor, Andria struggling to get the cape off her head and the rest much excited.)*

TOM—*(going immediately to Andria)* I'm sorry Andria, deucedly sorry. *(Removes the cape.)* What can I do?

(Finney and Theo pick up Carolyn and take her to the couch and administer to her.)

ANDRIA—I forgive you, Tom.

TOM—But you hate me.

ANDRIA—No, I don't hate you.

TOM—You are indifferent and that is worse. I had to do it. It was the only way. Say you think so.

ANDRIA—You haven't even looked at Carolyn.

TOM—Tell me—do you mean what you said to me—here, alone, before the others came back—do you?

ANDRIA—How stern you are!

TOM—Do you?

ANDRIA—*(teasingly)* I—I think I was playing.

TOM—*(desperately)* You had no business to play with me. I love you.

ANDRIA—And I love you—Tom!

(She is about to go into his outstretched arms when Carolyn suddenly comes to life.)

CAR.—(*sitting up*) Tom—oh, Tom! (*She holds out her hands to him. Tom is surprised to say the least, and the rest stand about, amazed*) Please, Tom, I've been looking everywhere for you. (*Her lip quivers. Tom goes to her. Andria is transfixed.*)

TOM—What is it?

CAR.—I'm so happy. (*Pulling him to her.*) I've been terribly lonesome. (*She nestles close to him and Tom is obliged to put an arm about her to keep her from falling.*) Just terribly lonesome, Tom!

(*At this, Andria turns and goes from the room, slamming the door after her.*)

TOM—I don't understand.

(*At this point Theo beckons Finney and they steal off after Andria.*)

CAR.—You are Tom, aren't you?

TOM—(*grimly*) I am.

CAR.—(*snuggling into his coat*) Oh! Has he gone—the earl? ..

TOM—No!

CAR.—Oh!

TOM—Don't you think you can sit up now like a good girl?

CAR.—(*drearily*) No.—Are they terribly angry with me?

TOM—They love you too much for that.

CAR.—And they still expect me to marry him?

TOM—I'm afraid so.

CAR.—(*sitting up straight*) Then I refuse to go home.

TOM—(*rising*) You must go home.

CAR.—I won't go home. (*she rises.*)

TOM—Then I shall have to compel you.

CAR.—Oh, please, how can you be so cruel? How would you like to be made to marry someone you didn't care for in the least?

TOM—(*unreasonably*) I'd marry him!

CAR.—Oh! (*She weeps.*)

TOM—Think of your mother and the anxiety you are causing her.

CAR.—I don't care! (*Stamps foot.*)

TOM—(*peremptorily*) Come.

CAR.—(*fairly shrieking*) I shan't.

TOM—What can I do to make you?

CAR.—Nothing, as long as he is there.

TOM—So you absolutely refuse to marry the earl?

CAR.—I do!

TOM—Then, suppose we go home and tell them so.

CAR.—No-o. (*Cautiously.*) They might inveigle me into it. —There is only one way.

TOM—Yes?

CAR.—Tell them that you and I are engaged. (*Tom groans.*) Of course, we aren't really, but just until he sails back home and I am safe.

TOM—I can't do it.

CAR.—(*stubbornly*) Very well, I sha'n't go home. (*She starts for door.*)

TOM—Where are you going?

CAR.—Away—anywhere. Good-by. Remember—(*with a sob*) you might have saved me from this.

TOM—Come here!

CAR.—Are you going to do as I say?

TOM—I suppose I must. (*Goes to door rear.*)

TOM—Andria! Andria!

(*Andria comes to door.*)

ANDRIA—Yes, Mr. Dupre.

TOM—Will you believe me if I tell you the wildest kind of a story and—still have faith in me?

ANDRIA—No!! (*She turns and goes once more, slamming the door after her.*)

TOM—(*agonized*) Andria! (*Starts after her.*)

CAR.—(*excited*) If you go another step, I shall run away and never come home. (*Stamps her foot. He turns and looks at her, then holding out his hand, speaks kindly:*)

TOM—Come.

CAR.—(*drawing back*) We are engaged—remember! until—

TOM—Yes—we are engaged— (*with a groan.*)

(*She goes out rear door first, and he follows after her as the curtain falls.*)

CURTAIN



ACT III.

Time—Late afternoon of the next day.

Scene—Same as Act I.

Discovered—Carolyn in the depths of a chair, with Mrs. Dawson bending over her.

CAR.—Oh, mummy, it's so good to be home. I was terribly afraid! There was a big black man—the husband of—

MRS. D.—(*soothingly*) There—there, dear, don't recall it. You're home now, and you're never going away again.

CAR.—And I'm not going to marry the earl unless I really want to.

MRS. D.—(*quickly*) No!

CAR.—And I am to see how he takes his tea before I judge?

MRS. D.—Yes.

CAR.—Then, there's only one thing that troubles me.

MRS. D.—What is it, dearie?

CAR.—Tom! —I'm afraid that girl will never forgive him, and he does love her awfully.— We must find a way to help him.

MRS. D.—We will, honey.

CAR.—Do you know, mummy, I think it would be miserable to be married to Tom. He's so handsome, and all the women fall in love with him. —It wouldn't be a very comfortable feeling to be married to Tom, would it, mummy?

MRS. D.—(*here is her chance*) No, dear. I have always said give me a plain man and a life of peace.

CAR.—He's a dear and all that, but— (*with a sigh*) I've learned a lot these last days.

MRS. D.—My darling!

CAR.—Will you make daddy fix things up between Tom and that girl?

MRS. D.—I will, honey.

(*Enter Susan.*)

SUSAN—The earl, madam.

CAR.—Oh! (*She starts to rise.*)

MRS. D.—(*holding Car. back.*) Show him in, Susan. (*Susan goes off.*)

CAR.—I'm frightened, mummy.

MRS. D.—(*soothingly*) Hush, dearie. Sit down. Remember, you are an invalid. (*She fusses over her a bit, although Carolyn is quite perfect.*)

(*Enter Craven. Mrs. D. goes forward to meet him.*)

CRAVEN—She has come down?

MRS. D.—Yes, she is here. (*She leads him ceremoniously to Carolyn, who extends her hand and smiles gently.*)

CRAVEN—(*taking her hand*) This is the happiest moment of my life.

(*For a second only, Carolyn scrutinizes him while Mrs. D. holds her breath.*)

CAR.—(*at last*) Why, I shouldn't have known you. You are so different.

CRAVEN—I am sure that is the best compliment you could pay me.

MRS. D.—You may know it is sincere. Sit down.

CRAVEN—Your mother and I have been the best of pals.

MRS. D.—(*taking her stand back of Carolyn's chair*) —Companions in misery. Do you think she looks like a convalescent?

CRAVEN—No-o. A little weariness about the eyes, perhaps, but that is always becoming.

CAR.—I've been through a lot these last days.

CRAVEN—(*sympathetically*) A terrible thing, to be shut up in one room with only a wall to meditate on.

MRS. D.—(*quickly*) But it's all over now, and she'll be herself in a day or two. (*To Craven.*) You'll excuse me? I have some telephoning.

CRAVEN—Certainly.

(*Mrs. D. starts toward door and turns back.*)

MRS. D.—Of course you'll stay to dinner?

CRAVEN—(*to Car.*) May I?

CAR.—Of course.

MRS. D.—There! (*To Craven.*) Take good care of her.

CRAVEN—Depend upon it. (*Exit Mrs. D., door R.*) Your mother is quite another person. She was fearfully upset last week.

CAR.—I suppose so. (*He draws up a chair and sits.*) Things were rather upsetting.

CRAVEN—I'm glad you didn't have to cut your hair.

CAR.—Are you?

CRAVEN—It's beautiful hair. (*boyishly*) I always remember it as a kind of halo.

CAR.—Really?

CRAVEN—(*not losing any time*) Do you recall that summer at Baden?

CAR.—Oh, yes, perfectly. Mother was so sweet. She let me do just as I liked.

CRAVEN—Remember the day we went hiking and you lost your hat on the edge of a precipice?

CAR.—(*getting excited*) Yes, and you wanted to climb down and get it, and I was afraid to have you. —I wouldn't be afraid to have you now.

CRAVEN—No?

CAR.—I am quite sure you could get down and back safely.

CRAVEN—(*laughing*) That's encouraging. You do think I've changed, don't you?

CAR.—You are so much—nicer!

(*Enter Susan door rear, with tea wagon, and wheels it to them.*)

CAR.—Of course you look about the same.

CRAVEN—Unfortunately.

CAR.—No—I don't say unfortunately. I *like* homely men!

CRAVEN—Thank you. *You* haven't changed.

CAR.—Oh, dear, how stupid!

CRAVEN—In appearance, I mean.

CAR.—(*to Susan*) I'll serve, Susan. That is all.

(*Exit Susan, rear door.*)

CAR.—I don't know whether that's a compliment or not.

CRAVEN—It is.

CAR.—(*pouring tea*) You like tea, don't you? All Englishmen do.

CRAVEN—Very much.

CAR.—I hope I've changed in other ways. I'm quite sure I have or I shouldn't like you as you are now—for I did like you at Baden, remember?

CRAVEN—But you have only seen me a few minutes.

CAR.—(*passing him his tea*) I knew you had changed when you entered the room. (*She watches him closely as he drinks his tea. It is the last test. However, he drinks it as any other man would, and she gives a sigh of relief and sips her own.*)

CRAVEN—(*setting down his cup*) I came to America for the express purpose of seeing you.

CAR.—Oh, I never had a man do all that because of me. I am thrilled.

CRAVEN—I would have gone around the world and visited Mars in search of you!

CAR.—Oh!

CRAVEN—I've thought of you a whole lot during these last years.

CAR.—Have you? You've been in the midst of things, too.

CRAVEN—I have, a bit. I had you married a dozen times. I had you a Red Cross nurse, and then I dismissed the idea because you were too young. Once I thought I saw you in London.

CAR.—No, you didn't. I was a stupid stay-at-home during the war.

CRAVEN—I'm glad.

CAR.—Why?

CRAVEN—If you had gone across, you would have married.

CAR.—(*dreamily*) Perhaps.

CRAVEN—I shouldn't have liked that.

CAR.—How did you know I *wasn't* married?

CRAVEN—I didn't. I took a chance. Then, when I reached New York, I telephoned your mother.

CAR.—Yes. (*She has memories of that.*)

CRAVEN—She invited me out.

CAR.—Yes.

CRAVEN—I came, and then I didn't see you!

CAR.—(*scarcely audible*) No.

CRAVEN—It was deucedly disappointing, but your mother was kind to me and your father. I felt they liked me.

CAR.—And so you were comfortable.

CRAVEN—No, I wasn't. —There was you, the most important one of all.

CAR.—Oh! (*sinking deeper into the chair.*)

CRAVEN—I'm awfully in love with you—have been ever since I met you. I'd like to take you back to England as my wife.

CAR.—(*not meaning it*) I'm afraid I'd be homesick. You see, I've never been away from mother and dad.

CRAVEN—I wouldn't let you be homesick.

CAR.—Would you let me do whatever I liked? (*Whimsically.*)

CRAVEN—Exactly.

CAR.—Have you a nice country house?

CRAVEN—(*smiling*) Grand!

CAR.—Horses?

CRAVEN—Horses.

CAR.—Dogs?

CRAVEN—Dogs.

CAR.—And I wouldn't have to attend stupid parties?

CRAVEN—No.

CAR.—And I could have house parties of jolly people?

CRAVEN—As many as you wished.

CAR.—I think I'd like to be Lady Craver. It sounds terribly interesting.

Craven—It does to me. *(Suddenly she jumps up and runs to sit on the arm of his chair.)*

Car.—You are a dear, and I do like you immensely! *(She kisses him quickly on the top of the head. He attempts to catch her, but she darts away.)* Not here! Not now! I've some things to straighten out first. —Will you go to dad in the den?

Craven—*(rising)* I suppose I'll have to.

Car.—That's a good boy. Tom Dudley's with him, and I wish you'd send him in to me.

Craven—I will; but be quick with the interview. Tom's a deucedly handsome chap.

Car.—*(pointing a finger at him)* Jealous!

(Exit Craven, rear door, and Carolyn runs to the mirror to arrange her hair, humming all the while.)

(Enter Tom, rear door.)

Tom—Have you accepted him?

Car.—*(running to him)* I have. You need never give me another thought, Tommy. —Aren't you going to congratulate me?

Tom—*(gallantly)* I am. *(shaking hands with her.)* He's a mighty decent fellow. I wish you all happiness. —And your mother?

Car.—She doesn't know yet. —Poor mamma!

Tom—Not now. Her ambition is realized.

Car.—Isn't it wonderful to have everything so happy all around?

Tom—*(moodily)* Yes.

Car.—Now, there's dad. He's happy, too, and I'm happy, and— *(suddenly)* Oh, Tommy, forgive me, I forgot.

Tom—I forgive you.

Car.—Did you go to the studio?

Tom—I did.

Car.—And she wouldn't listen to you?

TOM—She wouldn't see me.

CAR.—She's heartless. —Do you think it would do any good if I went?

TOM—It might.

CAR.—Suppose I sent for her to come here?

TOM—She wouldn't come.

CAR.—She might. (*pulls bell cord.*) I'll write a note telling her I must see her and that I am unable to go to her. (*She goes to table, takes paper, etc.*) She won't think she's going to see you. And after we get her here—

TOM—No—no—

(*Enter Susan, door rear.*)

CAR.—Just a minute, Susan. (*She sits and writes rapidly, while Tom paces the floor.*)

CAR.—(*folding note*) Have this sent to the address right away, Susan.

SUSAN—Yes, miss. (*Takes note. Exit door rear.*)

TOM—What did you say?

CAR.—I just begged her to come. She will come, Tommy. I feel sure she will, and we won't let her out of the house until she has forgiven you.

TOM—I wish I felt as optimistic about the thing as you do.

CAR.—Haven't you had any lunch?

TOM—No; I don't care for any.

CAR.—Don't you want any dinner?

TOM—No.

CAR.—(*worried*) But, Tommy, you must eat. (*Thoughtfully.*) Funny, isn't it? I don't want any dinner, either. I'm too happy to eat, and you're too unhappy. (*Going to door.*) I'll send dad to you. —Or, perhaps you'd rather be alone. —Would you, Tommy, rather be alone?

TOM—I don't care.

CAR.—(*now really concerned*) I don't think you ought to be alone. You act just like those heroes in novels, and I'm afraid you have a dreadful revolver concealed in your pocket. I'm going to send dad right in.

(*She goes out door rear, after a backward glance of concern for Tom. A second later Mr. D. enters and looks at Tom fixedly.*)

TOM—Well?

MR. D.—Tom, old boy, we've got to do something about this affair. I don't like to see such despair on a youthful countenance. Can't we hatch up a scheme whereby this cruel female can be made to see the light?

TOM—You can't blame her.

MR. D.—No—I suppose not. She must think you a kind of nut.

TOM—Exactly.

MR. D.—And you did it for us. Old boy, I'd do anything to make amends. Can't she be brought here by main force?

TOM—Carolyn has sent for her. Perhaps she'll come.

MR. D.—(*following Tom about close at his heels*) If she don't I'll go after her.

(*Enter, door right, Carolyn and Craven.*)

CAR.—(*going to Tom*) I've sent the car for her. It seemed the quicker way.

TOM—I don't think she'll come.

CAVREN.—(*whose thoughts are elsewhere*) Has your mother come down?

CAR.—No.

CAVREN.—(*signalling to Car.*) Shall we—?

CAR.—No—no—no! Wait for mamma. She'll be down presently.

CAVREN.—Just as you wish. (*He hums a tune. He is so happy he can't help it. Tom glowers at him.*)

CAR.—Oh, dad, isn't it wonderful to be so happy?

MR. D.—Ah, my dear, it is. (*With great eloquence.*)

CAR.—(*regarding Tom with deepest pity*) Arthur?

CRAVEN—Yes.

(*Tom continues to pace, but Mr. D. has stopped.*)

CAR.—Are all artists temperamental?

CRAVEN—They say so.

CAR.—(*her eyes still on Tom*) Is it nice to be temperamental?

CRAVEN—Er—it's tolerable, when one is a genius.

CAR.—But sometimes isn't temperament a good part temper?

CRAVEN—Yes.

CAR.—Is it hard to deal with temperament?

CRAVEN—Very.

CAR.—(*with a smug little sigh*) I'm glad I haven't got it.

(*Enter Mrs. D., door rear. She is fearful, of course. She has spent an awful half hour of doubt, but she takes the situation in at a glance and becomes buoyant.*)

MRS. D.—(*going to her daughter and kissing her*) Sweetie! (*Turning.*) Hulloo, Tom.

CAR.—(*signalling Craven*) Now.

(*Unexpectedly Craven is seized with embarrassment.*)

CRAVEN—Er—I—we—

CAR.—(*laughing gayly*) Why, he's actually embarrassed. (*Goes to him and takes his arm.*) I believe I like you embarrassed. (*Whispers to him.*) Shall I say it?

TOM—(*sarcastically*) I don't think it's necessary to say anything.

MRS. D.—(*fairly pouncing on her daughter*) You're

going to marry him. Daddy! Daddy! Oh, my darling honey girl!

MR. D.—(*coming forward*) Going to forsake your old dad, are you?

(*Carolyn is passed from one loving parent to the other.*)

CAR.—(*weeping a little*) But, Daddy, you're coming to see us most of the time. I wouldn't marry him if you weren't.

MR. D.—(*patting her*) That's it. That's the girl.

MRS. D.—(*turning to Craven*) My son! My dear boy.

CAR.—(*breaking away from the group and dancing down stage*) And I'm going to have the nicest wedding, with bridesmaids, flower-girls and pages.

MR. D.—Whew!

CAR.—And, oh, mummy, come in the library. I've something to show you. (*Catches her mother and leads her to door right.*) And daddy, too. Come!

MRS. D.—(*fluttering*) Dear me! Such surprises!

CAR.—Come, dad. Oh, it's wonderful. You'll be astounded!

MR. D.—Whew!

(*They go out door rear, a happy laughing group, quite forgetful of poor Tom. Tom comes forward and sinks into a chair, moodily takes out a cigarette and forgets to light it.*)

(*Susan admits Andria by door rear. She comes well into the room before she sees Tom. Exit Susan.*)

ANDRIA—(*in a low voice*) Oh, it's you! (*turns as if to go.*)

TOM—Andria—please!

ANDRIA—Where is Miss Dawson?

TOM—She will be in presently. Won't you sit down?

ANDRIA—And wait with you? Never! (*She starts to door.*)

(*Tom rushes ahead and shuts the door and stands, his back against it.*)

TOM—You are not going.

ANDRIA—I shall scream.

TOM—Very well. They will not help you. They think as I do, that you should at least hear an explanation.

ANDRIA—Explanation? What can an explanation mean now?

TOM—You are unreasonable.

ANDRIA—You are deceitful.

TOM—No—I am not and you wouldn't think so if you would listen to me.

ANDRIA—(*smiling*) Go on. Tell your story. (*She comes down stage*) Try to explain yourself. You will only get in deeper, but I, at least shall have the satisfaction of watching you flounder.

TOM—(*delighted*) You will listen to me? (*Comes to her.*)

ANDRIA—Yes.

TOM—(*indicating chair*) Sit here.

ANDRIA—(*choosing another*) I'll sit here.

TOM—To begin with, I never saw Carolyn Dawson until that night in the studio. She has been educated in a French Convent.

ANDRIA—(*smiling*) That's a good beginning.

TOM—I was sent by her mother to search for her. She—she had run away from the earl—the man whom she has now consented to marry.

ANDRIA—She has consented to him—then? (*With a wise smile.*)

TOM—She has.

ANDRIA—Oh!

TOM—She refused to see him when he first came,

and she took it into her head to run away. It seems three days of it was enough. —She—was glad to see me.

ANDRIA—Why should she be glad to see you if you were perfect strangers?

TOM—(*earnestly*) To her I was her father's emissary. Perhaps I neglected to tell you I am of the firm of Dawson & Dudley. Naturally she had heard her parents speak of me many times. I—I was a kind of family friend.

ANDRIA—(*rising*) No, I don't believe you. (*starts to door.*)

TOM—(*desperate*) Andria!

ANDRIA—(*fiercely*) You wanted to marry her and now that you find she will not have you—you—

TOM—(*as fiercely*) It's a lie! (*Follows her to the door.*)

(*They stand glaring at each other, when the door bursts open and Mr. D. enters.*)

MR. D.—(*taken back*) Well—well—well! (*He looks from Tom to Andria.*)

(*Andria looks at him. They stare at each other a second as if hypnotized, then—*)

ANDRIA—You!

MR. D.—(*putting a hand*) My dear young lady, I'm glad to see you.

ANDRIA—(*all smiles*) Thanks to you that you do see me.

MR. D.—Ha, ha, ha! You're looking fit. Were there ever any ill effects? (*Tom is once more forgotten and stands staring at them in perfect amazement.*)

ANDRIA—Never! You rescued me just in time. Ugh! That dreadful undertow!

MR. D.—Deucedly narrow escape.

ANDRIA—So they told me afterward.

MR. D.—You were pretty much gone, young lady.

ANDRIA—I've often thought of you and wondered what became of you.

MR. D.—Yes—yes, of course. Strange we should meet again, and in my house.

ANDRIA—(*suddenly aware of Tom, which fact makes her stiffen*) I can only thank you once again, Mr

MR. D.— —Dawson.

ANDRIA—Mr. Dawson, and say good-by.

MR. D.—No—no! Look here. I can't let you go like this. You are—er—a friend of Tom's. (*To Tom.*) This is the girl?

TOM—It is; but she refuses to believe my story.

MR. D.—Tut, tut, of course she doesn't.

ANDRIA—I'm afraid I do, Mr. Dawson. You don't know the circumstances.

MR. D.—(*with mischief in his eye*) Look here young lady. That day I rescued you from drowning you—

ANDRIA—Oh! (*suddenly she, too, remembers.*)

MR. D.—(*going on mercilessly*) —you promised to do for me any favor within reason, that I might ask of you.

(*Tom starts.*)

ANDRIA—Yes—yes, I did.

MR. D.—Well, I'm asking it. Make up with Tom and marry him.

TOM—(*starting toward her*) Andria!

ANDRIA—Oh—I—

MR. D.—Mustn't go back on your word. (*Pats her shoulder.*) And just remember I haven't saved your life to ruin it, my dear. I saved you for happiness. (*Slyly.*) And you'll have it with Tom, I'll guarantee. (*With a final pat, he goes off rear door.*)

(Tom and Andria regard each other seriously. Suddenly Andria with a little sob runs to him. Tom takes her in his arms.)

ANDRIA—Oh, Tom, what did you put your arm about her for?

TOM—I had to—to hold her up.

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